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Damage Control Association

Wildlife Damage Management, Internet Center  
for

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October 2000

## The Probe, Issue 213 – November/December 2000

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## Trapping in the New Millennium

*Dave Purwin, President, Desert Wildlife Services, Tucson, Arizona*

*Dexter Oliver, Wildlife Field Tech/Trapper/Outdoor Writer*

The times, they are a-changin', and this is especially true with the way human beings view other members of the animal kingdom. Because most of our society now lives in cities, far removed from the natural world, it is often difficult to justify nuisance wildlife control methods. An awareness of the continuing destruction of wild habitat, combined with an inescapable Disneyesque approach to animals, has given rise to new sensibilities with those who count — the voting public.

Mankind has been trying to invent a better mouse trap ever since the first cave dweller used a deadfall with some success. Nowadays, however, a person using any device to catch, hold, or kill an animal must be concerned not only with how effective the contraption is, but also how humane it may be considered.

In the latter half of the twentieth century the once prestigious wild fur industry came under attack because of the way many species were routinely harvested. Organized groups in Britain, eastern Europe, and the United States targeted the steel leghold trap and lethal snares as outdated and inhumane. Boycotts against fur taken with such implements threatened the market as much, or more, than the whims of fashion. Due to growing public sentiment, federal and state wildlife agencies also found themselves facing the loss of historical management tools. The trickle down effect reached private enterprise, such as nuisance wildlife control operators.

The trapping industry began researching and developing refinements such as offset jaws and softcatch jaws. Subtle changes such as baseplate center swivels and shock springs became standard issue. But the steel leghold trap can't seem to shake its "bad" reputation with people who have never touched one, much less caught an animal with one. So the changes in trapping mechanisms have been forced to continue, and that is not likely to end. Luckily, people who deal hands-on with wildlife have always been innovative.

Two results of this desire to continue with efficient wildlife control tools, while maintaining a recognition of public opinion, are the Belisle foot snare and the Collarum canine capture device. We had a chance to field test both of these recently, in Tucson, Arizona.

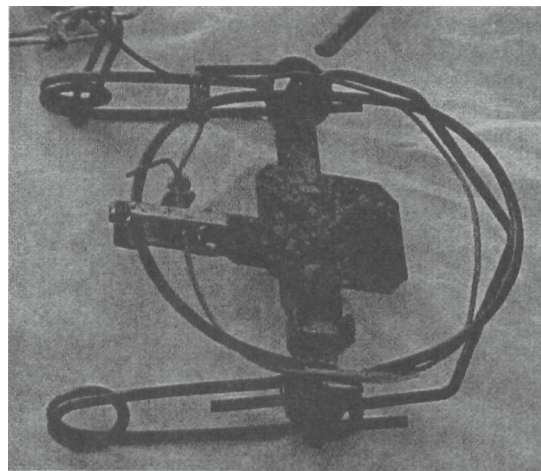
The Belisle is a true hybrid. It seems to combine features from the leghold, the Fremont or Aldrich foot snares, and a Conibear spring trap. We

acquired one from RAM Wildlife Control Supplies, Box 191, International Falls, Minnesota, 56649.

While a bit difficult to explain setting in words, the diagram instructions that came with it proved sufficient. Basically, thick wire jaws are opened, two coiled long-springs are set, with a pan trigger, and an open snare is placed on top. It is all buried the same way a steel trap would be, using the same kind of sets, such as cubby, dirt hole, etc. The animal's paw is briefly held by the jaws, until the snare has had a chance to close tight. The spring mechanism then falls free from the snare loop.

The Collarum, on the other hand, throws a snare loop over the animal's head and tightens around the neck. It is designed to be canine specific, targeting dogs, coyotes, and foxes. The two we used came from NWS Wildlife Control Supplies, owned and operated by Alan Huot, distributor of the Collarum live capture device (located at e-mail address [sales@wildlifecontrolsupplies.com](mailto:sales@wildlifecontrolsupplies.com)). Some interesting engineering went into the Collarum.

The yoke that throws the snare loop is powered by coil springs. Another long coil spring tightens the snare after it has gone over a canid's head. The baited trigger must be pulled up on to fire the device. In order to be effective, the animal must be forced to approach the set from one direction only. A typical cubby-style setup works well. Everything is buried except for the bait, and care must be taken to make sure dirt doesn't get under the coil springs. They won't work properly otherwise. A covering of waxed paper solves the problem. The trapper should also be aware that the yoke is powerful enough, and has sharp enough edges, that it can be



Shown above, the Belisle foot snare

*Continued on page 2, col. 2*

# CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

**February 5-7, 2001: Wildlife Control Technology/NWCOA Seminar, Imperial Palace, Las Vegas, Nevada.** For more information see the NWCOA website at [www.nwcoa.com](http://www.nwcoa.com). Call 815-286-3039 to register.

**April 18-19, 2001: The Role of Predator Control as a Tool in Game Management: A compendium of Texas experiences, Y O Ranch Hotel & Conference Center, Kerrville, Texas.** For more information, contact Dale Rollins at (915) 653-4576 or mail to: [d-rollins@tamu.edu](mailto:d-rollins@tamu.edu).

**August 27-30, 2001: 3rd Combined Bird Strike Committee USA/ Bird Strike Committee Canada Conference.** The Westin Calgary, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Presentations at the conference have included papers, posters and demonstrations on wildlife control techniques, new technologies, land-use issues, training, engineering standards, and habitat management. Presenter proposals are due by April 2, 2001. Early Bird registration are due by June 1, 2001. For information contact Bruce MacKinnon by e-mail, [mackinb@tc.qc.ca](mailto:mackinb@tc.qc.ca), phone (613) 990-0515, or fax (613) 990-0508.

**September 9-14, 2001: 3rd European Vertebrate Pest Management Conference, Kibbutz Ma'ale Hachamisha Guest House, Israel.** Abstracts and posters for the conference are invited and due by March 2001. For further information, contact Conference Secretariat: Ortra Ltd., P.O. Box 9352, Tel Aviv 61092, Israel, email [vert@ortra.co.il](mailto:<vert@ortra.co.il>) or visit web site <http://www.ortra.com/vertebrate>.



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Your contributions of articles to *The Probe* are welcome and encouraged. The deadline for submitting materials is the 15th of the month prior to publication. Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of NADCA.

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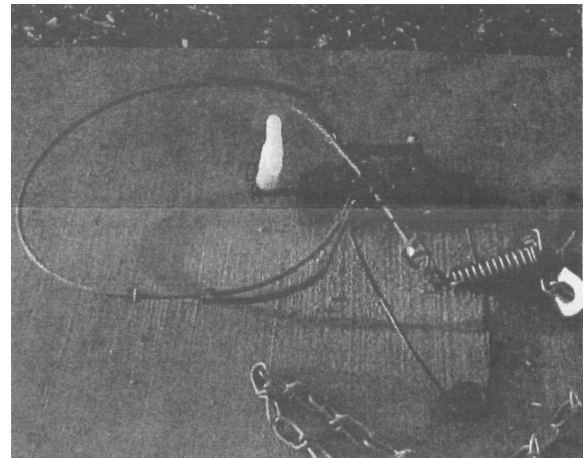
## Trapping in the New Millennium

harmful if it goes off unexpectedly. There is also the potential for damage to teeth or eyes of a canid if it doesn't get its head squarely through the yoke. These drawbacks will probably be negligible to an urban trapper after nuisance canids where legholds can't be used.

So do these devices work? Yes, they do, very well, actually. Are they "humane"? That's a relative term, but we would say they fit the bill.

The Belisle foot snare was set in the desert and caught a female coyote by the hind foot. The snare held with no apparent damage to the animal. The Collarum was used on a suburban farm property and easily caught a free-roaming dog that had eluded county animal control officers for years. There was no apparent damage to the dog. We can recommend both devices.

Keeping up with new animal control methodology is not only necessary for those who practice wildlife management in our quickly changing world, it's also a lot of fun.



The Collarum canine capture device shown with the "T" bait cap.



A free-ranging, domestic dog captured in the Collarum device.

# Wildlife Damage Management in the News

## New State Directors for USDA Wildlife Services

David Bergman will become State Director for Wildlife Services in Arizona early in February 2001, according to a recent announcement by Western Regional Director Mike Worthen. Bergman replaces former SD Steve Fairaizl who transferred to the Western Regional Office.

Mr. Bergman has worked as a Staff Specialist at the WS Operational Support Staff, Riverdale MD, for the past 3 years. He started his career at the Denver Wildlife Research Center's bird research field station in North Dakota, and later was State Wildlife Biologist for Wildlife Services in that state before he moved to his present position.

Rodney Kruschke was named WS State Director for Wyoming effective November 19, 2000. He will replace Rick Phillips who retired in August. Kruschke comes to Wyoming from Oregon, where he was a District Supervisor from 1987 and Assistant State Director since 1997. Before Oregon, he served in several positions for the Texas Wildlife Services program.

— Guy C. Connoly

## Election Day Results Are Here

### ALASKA:

*Measure 1* — FAILED (36% to 64%) - would have barred all citizen ballot initiatives relating to the protection of wildlife.

*Measure 6* — PASSED (53% to 47%) - will retain the prohibition of same-day airborne ("land-and-shoot") hunting of wolves, which Alaska voters banned in 1996.

### ARIZONA:

*Prop102* — FAILED (38% to 62%) - would have required a two-thirds supermajority vote to approve any ballot initiative relating to the protection of wildlife.

### MASSACHUSETTS:

*Question 3* — FAILED (49% to 51%) - would have prohibited dog racing and meetings at which betting or wagering on dog racing occurs.

### MONTANA:

*Initiative 143* — PASSED (52% to 48%) - will impose a moratorium on new game farm licenses and will ban "canned hunts"

### NORTH DAKOTA:

*Question 1* — PASSED (77% to 23%) - will create a new section of the North Dakota Constitution relating to the right to hunt, trap, and fish.

### OREGON:

*Measure 97* — FAILED (39% to 61%) - would have banned the use of steel-jawed leghold traps & other body-gripping traps for recreation and commerce in fur, and would have banned the use of Compound 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) and sodium cyanide.

### VIRGINIA:

*Question 2* — PASSED (60% to 40%) - will amend the Virginia Constitution to establish "a right to hunt, fish, and harvest game."

### WASHINGTON:

*Initiative 713* — PASSED (54% to 46%) - will ban the use of steel-jawed leghold traps and other body-gripping traps for recreation and commerce in fur, and will ban the use of Compound 1080 (sodium fluoroacetate) and sodium cyanide.

— Robert Schmidt

## NADCA Meets New Officers

NADCA members met at the Eastern Wildlife Damage Management Conference in State College, Pennsylvania and were introduced to their new officers. People attending the meeting included Dan Lewis, Vince Megargel, Phil Nichols, Doug Helick, Rick Shadel, Laura Simon, Paul Curtis, Scott Hygnstrom, Chris Vann, Dick Curnow, Bob Timm, Geroge Gallagher, Lynn Braband, Mark Thurston, Mark Tobin, Les Terry, Gary San Julian, David Jones, Calvin Brock, Kris Godwin, Mike Dwyer, Kurt Vercauteren, Carson Kennard, Stephen Vantassel, David Ruid, Rick Owens, Jerry Pickel, Mike Miller, Bruce Leland, Robert Hudson, Gary Larson, Chad Richardson, Daniel Martin, and Jim Parkhurst.

The history of NADCA was presented by Scott Hygnstrom and Bob Timm. There followed a lively discussion about the future of NADCA and how it can best serve its members. Reed-Joseph International presented a check for \$1,000 to NADCA's new president, Mike Conover. NADCA expresses its thanks to Reed-Joseph for this generous donation.

## County Cancels Contract With WS

According to a story in "HUMANElines" - a website project sponsored by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) - the Board of Supervisors for Marin County, California has voted to terminate their contract with USDA/APHIS WS by June 30, 2002.

The HSUS story described this as "a precedent setting victory for California wildlife," and described the lethal methods employed by WS as "brutal by any standards." Marin County will provide \$50,000 annually to experiment with non-lethal, humane methods of livestock protection such as fencing, guard animals, and possibly recruiting shepherds from Mongolia or Peru to watch over herds.

The story goes on to state, "The Marin County decision correlates nicely with the statewide ban on steel-jawed leghold traps and two poisons (Compound 1080 and sodium cyanide) passed by California voters in 1998."

— excerpted from *HUMANElines*, Issue #119, November 2000.



*The Editor thanks contributors to this issue: Dexter Oliver, David Purwin, Stephen Vantassel, Guy Connoly, Robert Schmidt, and Bob Timm.*



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# Video Review: Stephen Vantassel, NWCO Correspondent

*"Critter Control Corporation Nuisance Wildlife Control Technician Certification Exam and Training Manual"*  
Edited by the Staff of Critter Control. Critter Control Inc., 9435 E. Cherry Bend Road, Traverse City, MI  
49684231-947-2400.

If you have been in the field of animal damage control, chances are you are aware of the Critter Control Corporation. As can be expected from a company with over 100 offices/franchises nationwide, Critter Control has developed testing materials for its workers. The exam and training manual that I was given was written for potential technicians in the State of Michigan. However, as the manual suggests, it is highly adaptable for use in other states or by the training officer of other animal control companies.

The training manual is 124 pages long and is broken up in six major sections. Each chapter comes with its own set of review questions. The questions are written and structured to prepare you for the type and style of questions you can expect to see in the exam. The questions also center on the points the examiners believe the reader must be familiar with.

Chapter one covers the broad realities of state and federal laws governing pesticides and wildlife. Of course, given the differences between states, this chapter can only give the highlights. I found it particularly interesting that the emphasis was on OSHA laws and carcass disposal. These are subjects not normally covered by training manuals. I was slightly annoyed over the deference to the AVMA euthanasia guidelines. For the manual to suggest that the AVMA guidelines should be followed to my mind is giving too much power to a group of people who have little understanding of what NWCO's do.

Chapter two discusses the control of birds, such as pigeons, starlings, and house sparrows. This chapter begins the manual's discussion of animal biology and the field control techniques that exploit that animal behavior information. All of the control chapters cover animal behavior, control techniques (including poison and shooting), and zoonotic disease issues.

Chapter three deals with domestic rodents, rats and mice. As I perused the chapter, I found it to be surprisingly detailed. It discussed a number of diseases, damage identification and control techniques. This level of detail makes perfect sense as there is a rather large pest control bias to the exam.

Chapter four moves out to cover wild rodents. This chapter dutifully covers tree squirrels, chipmunks and woodchucks. However, you may be surprised to know that it covers the information on hanta-virus, voles and muskrats.

Chapter five comprises the last animal control section and explains the control of typical problem wildlife such as, bats, moles, skunks, raccoons, rabbits, and white-tail deer. I never would have guessed that this manual would provide information on the control of white-tailed deer. To my mind the addition of deer to the manual shows how forward looking this examination program is. If deer numbers continue to rise as they have these past several years, states may be permitting NWCO's to have a more active role in deer control.

Appendices comprise the final section of this training manual. Here, the writers provide answers to all study questions and give

explanations for the answers. An extensive glossary of terms is also included. The manual's table of contents stated that it contains an appendix of damage prevention and control methods as well as a selected bibliography. Unfortunately, I was not able to find these items.

Overall the manual deserves high marks. I found it to be well written and very educational. The technical advisors consisting of Kevin Clark, Sean R. Carruth, Michael J. Dwyer, Dr. Chris Christensen, Dr. Marijo Christensen, and Dr. Michael Godfrey have certainly proved their abilities with this document. Readers may be interested to know that the manual is deceptively larger than 124 (8 1/2 x 11 inch) pages suggests due to the single spacing of the writing. If the work was double spaced, the document would exceed 240 pages. All that text with nary a single picture or diagram.

If you are looking for training materials that provide essential information from a vertebrate pest control perspective, then this manual is one you should look into obtaining. State agencies seeking a testing program for NWCO's that have pesticide licenses should also look at this manual. Of course, the advantage of the manual is also its disadvantage. Many states, like Massachusetts and Connecticut, separate pesticide licenses from NWCO licenses. Until those two tests are combined, I don't see a big future for this manual and the accompanying exams. If I had to criticize the manual further, I would say that I wish the writers would stop using the vague term live trap to refer to cage and box traps. I also would recommend that the manual include diagrams and pictures in the future.

The tests that accompany the manual were created by taking 100 questions from a 218 question pool. They wisely scramble the questions to create test A and test B to reduce the chances of cheating. The questions are multiple choice, true false and matching. But don't be deceived into thinking that the questions are necessarily easy to answer. The writers have creatively made the multiple choice more difficult by making some of the options, all of the above, A & B, none of the above etc. The matching questions are even harder as the answers can be used more than once thereby negating the process of elimination trick. I figured 75% of the test, covered diseases, poisons, laws, vermin and birds. So the test has a definite bias towards pest controllers. Like most standardized tests, this one uses a bubble answer sheet that can be scored by scanning or by a master overlay. Critter Control, in contrast to many states, requires a passing score of 80%. They also suggest that any person scoring above 95% be recognized as an instructor or test administrator.

It can be an excellent tool in winnowing out unqualified candidates for state licensing. I use the term licensing rather than the term certification, because I see certification as a higher level of expertise. For example, when teachers are certified, they must undergo not only a great deal of training but must pass an all day

*Continued on page 5, Col. 1*

# Wildlife Damage Management in the News

## Human Rabies Cases Reported

On average, there are fewer than three cases of human rabies infections reported nationwide. However, this year three cases in the United States and one in Canada have been reported on ProMED-mail since September. ProMED-mail is an international listserv dealing with disease outbreaks worldwide (see <http://www.promedmail.org>).

Rabies caused the death of an Amador County, California man in September — California's first human rabies fatality since 1995. In October, a 9 year-old boy died of rabies in Montreal, Quebec — the first case of a human rabies fatality in Quebec in over 35 years. Also in October, a Minnesota man died of rabies — Minnesota's first case since 1975 and only the fourth case in the last century. A foreign visitor in Albany, New York was diagnosed with rabies in October.

How the man in Albany contracted the disease is not known, but evidence indicated that he was not infected in the United States. The strain of rabies found in the other three cases were of bat origin. Although it is likely that these victims were bitten by a bat, it is possible that other animals, previously infected by a bat, could be responsible.

The Minnesota case underscores the importance of seeking prompt medical attention if you are bitten by an animal that could be infected with rabies. The Minnesota patient was bitten sometime between September 20 and 28, but did not seek medical attention until October 14 and rabies was confirmed on October 19 — the day of his death.

— excerpted from ProMED posts September 9, and October 3, 6, 17, and 31, 2000



Continued from page 4, Col. 2

## Video Review

exam. Nevertheless, this manual and exam can save states a great deal of time and headaches in instituting their own licensing program.

If you have a book, video etc. that you would like to have reviewed, please send it to:

Stephen Vantassel  
Wildlife Damage Control  
340 Cooley St.  
Springfield, MA 01128  
413-796-9916  
[stephen@wildlifedamagecontrol.com](mailto:stephen@wildlifedamagecontrol.com)

## Ever Wonder?

*Can rabies be transmitted from human-to-human by casual contact with an infected person ?*

In several of the ProMED posts related to the recent cases of human rabies, the concerns about the risk of infection for persons who had contact with the rabies victims, such as health care workers and family members, were expressed and addressed. In the September 9 post, Dr. Robert Hartman, Amador County's public health officer, said, "There never has been a documented case of human-to-human transmission of rabies except during corneal transplants." It was apparent in this post that Dr. Hartman was referring to "casual contact". There have been anecdotal reports of human-to-human transmission of rabies through the bite of an infected person.

Dr. Hartman went on to say that since the rabies virus is present in some human tissues and fluids, the risk is theoretically possible. He noted that persons who have had contact with rabies victims should undergo assessment and counseling to determine their risk and if they should receive the post-exposure treatments.

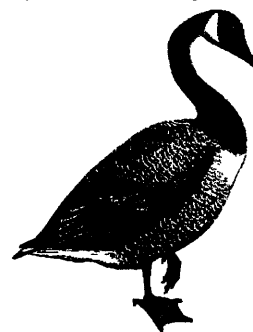
— Editor's note: I would like to add an important reminder for those of us who deal with wildlife. From some recent research for a publication I prepared on cleaning wildlife skulls, I was reminded that although it is considered rare, rabies can be transmitted by getting infected saliva or brain tissue into your mouth, eyes, or nose, or in an open wound.

## BATF Postpones Pyrotechnic Explorations

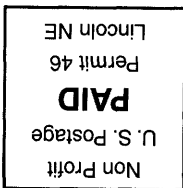
In the last issue of The Probe, it was reported that the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (BATF) halted the sale of certain pyrotechnic cartridges used in bird control. This order was based BATF's authority to regulate explosive devices. Prior to this order, pyrotechnics used in bird control were exempted from the explosive devices regulations.

A recent release from Sutton Ag Enterprises, of Salinas CA, announced that BATF has temporarily postponed the enforcement of regulations on the sale of bird control pyrotechnics and sales of these cartridges may proceed as before the order to halt sales was imposed. During this temporary postponement of enforcement, BATF is considering alternative procedures. One of the alternatives being considered is some version of a "Declaration of Use" form that may require the signature of some local authority.

— excerpted from a Sutton Ag Enterprises release



TIME VALUED MATERIAL — DO NOT DELAY



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## Membership Renewal and Application Form

### NATIONAL ANIMAL DAMAGE CONTROL ASSOCIATION

Mail to: Art Smith, Treasurer, Department of Fish, Game, & Parks, 523 E. Capitol Avenue, Pierre, SD 57501

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Home

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Office

Additional Address Info: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
Please use 9-digit Zip Code

Dues: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Membership Class: Student \$10.00 Active \$20.00 Sponsor \$40.00 Patron \$100 (Circle one)  
Check or Money Order payable to NADCA

Select one type of occupation or principal interest:

- |                                                             |                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Pest Control Operator  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> USDA - APHIS - Wildlife Services   | <input type="checkbox"/> Retired                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> USDA - Extension Service           | <input type="checkbox"/> ADC Equipment/Supplies |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal - not APHIS or Extension   | <input type="checkbox"/> State Agency           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foreign                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Trapper                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator | <input type="checkbox"/> University             |